

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To direct the Secretary of Defense to develop a plan to establish the Minority  
Institute for Defense Research, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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Mr. BROWN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred  
to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To direct the Secretary of Defense to develop a plan to  
establish the Minority Institute for Defense Research,  
and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Building Equitable Ac-  
5       cess to Contribute to Our National Security Act of 2021”  
6       or the “BEACON Act of 2021”.

7       **SEC. 2. MINORITY INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE RESEARCH.**

8       (a) PLAN TO ESTABLISH MINORITY INSTITUTE FOR  
9       DEFENSE RESEARCH.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after  
2           the date of the enactment of this section, the Sec-  
3           retary shall submit to the congressional defense com-  
4           mittees a plan (in this section referred to as the  
5           “Plan”) for the establishment of the Minority Insti-  
6           tute for Defense Research (in this section referred to  
7           as the “Consortium”).

8           (2) ELEMENTS.—The Plan shall include the fol-  
9           lowing:

10                (A) Information relating to the projected  
11                needs of the Department for the next twenty  
12                years with respect to essential engineering, re-  
13                search, or development capability.

14                (B) An assessment relating to the engi-  
15                neering, research, and development capability of  
16                each minority institution to identify each lead-  
17                ing minority institution.

18                (C) Information relating to the advance-  
19                ments and investments necessary to elevate a  
20                minority institution or a consortium of minority  
21                institutions to the research capacity of a Uni-  
22                versity Affiliated Research Center.

23                (D) Recommendations relating to actions  
24                that may be taken by the Department, Con-

1           gress, and minority institutions to establish the  
2           Consortium within 10 years.

3           (3) PUBLICLY AVAILABLE.—The Plan shall be  
4           posted on a publicly available website of the Depart-  
5           ment.

6           (b) NAMING OF THE CONSORTIUM.—With respect to  
7           the naming of the Consortium, the Secretary shall—

8           (1) establish a process to solicit and review pro-  
9           posals of names from—

10                   (A) minority institutions;

11                   (B) nonprofit institutions that advocate on  
12           behalf of minority institutions; and

13                   (C) members of the public;

14           (2) develop a list of all names received pursuant  
15           to paragraph (1);

16           (3) provide opportunity for public comment on  
17           the names included on such list; and

18           (4) choose a name from such list to name the  
19           Consortium.

20           (c) GRANT PROGRAM FOR LEADING MINORITY INSTI-  
21           TUTIONS.—

22           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may establish  
23           a program to award grants, on a competitive basis,  
24           to leading minority institutions for the purposes de-  
25           scribed in paragraph (2).

1           (2) PURPOSES.—The purposes described in this  
2 paragraph are the following:

3           (A) Establishing a legal entity for the pur-  
4 pose of entering into research contracts or  
5 agreements with the Federal Government or the  
6 Consortium.

7           (B) Developing the capability to bid on  
8 Federal Government or Consortium contracts.

9           (C) Requesting technical assistance from  
10 the Federal Government or a private entity with  
11 respect to contracting with the Federal Govern-  
12 ment or the Consortium.

13           (D) Recruiting and retaining research fac-  
14 ulty.

15           (E) Advancing research capabilities relat-  
16 ing to the national security of the United  
17 States.

18           (F) Any other matter determined appro-  
19 priate by the Secretary.

20           (3) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a  
21 grant under this section, a leading minority institu-  
22 tion shall submit to the Secretary an application  
23 therefor in such form, and containing such informa-  
24 tion, as the Secretary may require.

1           (4) PREFERENCE.—In awarding grants pursu-  
2           ant to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give pref-  
3           erence to a leading minority institution with a R1 or  
4           R2 status on the Carnegie Classification of Institu-  
5           tions of Higher Education.

6           (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7           (1) The term “congressional defense commit-  
8           tees” means—

9                   (A) the Committee on Armed Services and  
10                  the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;  
11                  and

12                   (B) the Committee on Armed Services and  
13                  the Committee on Appropriations of the House  
14                  of Representatives.

15           (2) The term “Department” means the Depart-  
16           ment of Defense.

17           (3) The term “leading minority institution”  
18           means a minority institution identified (pursuant to  
19           the assessment required under subsection (a)(2)(B))  
20           as being in the top 20 percent of all such institu-  
21           tions with respect to providing essential engineering,  
22           research, or development capability.

23           (4) The term “institution of higher education”  
24           has the meaning given such term in section 101 of

1 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.  
2 1001).

3 (5) The term “minority institution” means—

4 (A) a part B institution (as such term is  
5 defined in section 322(2) of the Higher Edu-  
6 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061(2))); or

7 (B) any institution of higher education at  
8 which not less than 50 percent of the total stu-  
9 dent enrollment consists of students from ethnic  
10 groups that are underrepresented in the fields  
11 of science and engineering.

12 (6) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary  
13 of Defense.

14 (7) The term “University Affiliated Research  
15 Center” means a research organization within an in-  
16 stitution of higher education that—

17 (A) provides or maintains Department es-  
18 sential engineering, research, or development  
19 capabilities; and

20 (B) receives sole source contract funding  
21 from the Department pursuant to section  
22 2304(c)(3)(B) of title 10, United States Code.

1   **SEC. 3. SUBCONTRACT REQUIREMENTS FOR MINORITY IN-**  
2                           **STITUTIONS.**

3           (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2304 of title 10, United  
4 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
5 lowing new subsection:

6           “(m)(1) The head of an agency shall require that a  
7 contract awarded to an educational institution pursuant  
8 to subsection (c)(3)(B) includes a requirement to sub-  
9 contract with one or more minority institutions for a total  
10 amount of not less than 5 percent of the amount awarded  
11 in the contract.

12          “(2) For the purposes of this subsection, a minority  
13 institution means—

14               “(A) a part B institution (as that term is de-  
15 fined in section 322(2) of the Higher Education Act  
16 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061(2))); or

17               “(B) any other institution of higher education  
18 (as that term is defined in section 101 of such Act  
19 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) at which not less than 50 percent  
20 of the total student enrollment consists of students  
21 from ethnic groups that are underrepresented in the  
22 fields of science and engineering.”.

23          (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
24 subsection (a) shall—

25               (1) take effect on October 1, 2026; and

1           (2) apply with respect to funds that are award-  
2       ed by the Department of Defense on or after such  
3       date.